

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF
WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND

1. Call to order: 4:30 p.m. Regular Meeting of August 20, 2015 at the Woonsocket Housing Authority, 679 Social Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

David Lahousse, Chairman
Bernadette Rochefort, Vice Chairwoman
Sally Anthony
Charles Baldelli
Roger Bouchard – Arrived 5:35 p.m.
Marc Dubois

Patrick Morganelli
Christine O'Connor
Robert Moreau
Theresa Corbeille - absent
Attorney Joseph J. Rodio, Sr.
Attorney Joseph J. Rodio, Jr.

2. Good and Welfare for the Audience – none
3. Good and Welfare for the Commissioners - none
4. On motion by Commissioner Baldelli, seconded by Commissioner Anthony, the Board unanimously voted (5-0) to accept the minutes for the regular meeting of June 18, 2015.
5. On motion by Vice Chairwoman Rochefort, seconded by Commissioner Baldelli, the Board unanimously voted (5-0) to accept bills paid for the months of June 2015 and July 2015.
6. Communications and Interest of the Authority - None.

7. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve and place on file for the purposes of discussion, the report of the Secretary. On a motion by Commissioner Baldelli and seconded by Vice Chairwoman Rochefort, the Board unanimously voted (5-0) to accept.

The Director submitted his Executive Summary as written highlighting teambuilding efforts where 40 employees attended a Pawsox game at the start of which an employee's son threw out the first pitch. Director Morganelli informed the Board of a survey that he had conducted by Reception which showed that over a two month period, 70% of customers indicated that they were in favor of the WHA administration building staying open later on Thursday evenings in order to accommodate their work schedules. A survey was then conducted amongst affected staff members who strongly indicated being in favor of a flex schedule to accommodate schedule change. There would be discussions with union representatives before going forward with any changes and with the Board to approve a change in policy.

Commissioner Baldelli expressed his great displeasure with the fact that the Director took the WHA staff to a Pawsox game at the Housing Authority's expense on Company time, yet the Board is not even offered a dinner at Christmas time. Director Morganelli responded that the ball game was a teambuilding event.

Director Morganelli went on to comment on 1) voluntary benefits potentially being offered to staff by AFLAC in the new year; 2) trainings offered to staff over the summer; 3) apartment turnover numbers being high due to many transfers being necessary in order to properly house residents who were improperly either over-housed or under-housed for the past several years; 4) the dozens of transfers the Director mandated putting a huge strain on the workforce; 5) his meetings with residents at different WHA developments to hear their needs and requests; work orders have been generated and items have been ordered to accommodate their requests; 6) the standard performer rating that the HCV program received from HUD for last year and the efforts underway to improve to high performer status this year; 7) the Capital Fund program being at the stage of prioritizing needs for funding for FY 2016.

Regarding development, the Director indicated that an application for a non-profit has been submitted. Regarding RAD, the Director noted that he has a much clearer understanding of the dilemma facing the WHA between the Choice Neighborhoods and the RAD, as well as a proposed solution. The Choice Neighborhood Initiative Grant was never submitted, even though the WHA had been told by HUD that it had been, but the WHA has been awarded a RAD which is funded by a Section 8 voucher mechanism. The RAD would only work with the Choice Neighborhoods \$30 million grant and 9% tax credits, but because RI is such a small state, there is not enough money. The Director stated that he, Attorney Rodio and Chairman Lahousse met with RI Housing, the Director of

which is also a former Director of HUD. The bad news is that there is not enough money in RI. Director Morganelli contacted Sokoloff Associates which has been working with the Pawtucket Housing Authority; feedback from RI Housing is that the WHA has hired a good team in Sokoloff Associates. The Director noted that he has had phone conversations with Sokoloff to discuss the WHA's options; walk away from the RAD or with the Board's blessing, phase the RAD across four stages. The first phase would be a rehabbing of a small number of units which would buy the WHA some time in order to couple with Choice Neighborhoods down the road. It has also been determined that there would not be any penalty for stopping after the first phase if the WHA chose to do so. For Phase 1 the WHA would not need a developer, but would need a non-profit, which would be the owner of those buildings that get rehabbed in that phase. Director Morganelli noted that there are also RAD teleconferences taking place bi-weekly. Attorney Rodio asked if the WHA has hired Sokoloff Associates, because that would need to go out to bid; the Director said no, but noted that Pawtucket Housing has hired them as a sole-source provider. Attorney Rodio expressed great concern about using Sokoloff Associates under the current terms.

Under Special Items, the Director mentioned the FEMA Grant for the snow storms is still ongoing; a NOFA for a ROSS Service Coordinator Grant for Resident Service Coordinators for the family developments for \$492K; and a second application for a \$3 million grant for workforce development in coordination with the state. Information on the passbook rate discussed at the June meeting will be brought back before the Board in the October meeting to begin on January 1, 2016. The Director asked Attorney Rodio to provide an update on the easement that the Army Corps of Engineers is requesting on the Kennedy Manor property. There will be a meeting with the City and a report back to the Board.

Commissioner Anthony asked about the WHA staying open on Thursday evenings, did anyone discuss Saturday mornings; no. Will there be someone alone in the building; no, there will be multiple staff people working together.

The Chairman asked if the 138 new chairs for Kennedy Manor went out to bid, and what was the total amount; the Director said yes, it did go out for bid and the amount was about \$88 per chair. The Chairman asked to see the bid because at over \$12k, it should have come before the Board and did not. The Director apologized and said he would look into it.

Commissioner Baldelli addressed conferences for Commissioners said he does not ever want to hear that there is no money for such training in light of the money spent on the Pawsox game. The Chair commented that there had never been a problem with such requests in the past. The Director said he would make the conferences available.

8. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve and place on file for the purposes of discussion, the reports of the Direct Staff, legal and financial. On a motion by Commissioner Dubois and seconded by Commissioner Baldelli, the Board unanimously voted (5-0) to accept.

There was no discussion.

9. Report of Committees – none

10. Unfinished Business - none

11. New Business

- A. Approval of Resolution #1144 – Amendment of ACOP regarding rental obligation of tenants who are vacating. A motion was made by Commissioner Dubois and seconded by Commissioner Baldelli to table the item.

There was further no discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairman Lahousse
Vice Chairwoman Rochefort
Commissioner Anthony
Commissioner Baldelli
Commissioner Dubois

- B. The Chairman asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws 42-46-5(a)(1) for discussion of job performance and personnel matters regarding the Executive Director. The Executive Director has been notified in writing in accordance with R.I. Gen. Law 42-46-5(a)(1). A motion was made by Commissioner Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Anthony.

There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairman Lahousse
Vice Chairwoman Rochefort
Commissioner Anthony
Commissioner Baldelli
Commissioner Bouchard
Commissioner Dubois

- C. A vote was taken in Executive Session but is sealed, along with the minutes, which were unanimously approved to be sealed.
- D. The Chairman asked for a motion to appoint the Director of Administration & Personnel, "Acting Executive Director." A motion was made by Commissioner Bouchard and seconded by Commissioner Dubois.

There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the "Ayes" and "Nays".

AYES

NAYS

Chairman Lahousse
Vice Chairwoman Rochefort
Commissioner Anthony
Commissioner Baldelli
Commissioner Bouchard
Commissioner Dubois

12. Adjournment

Chairman Lahousse asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Commissioner Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Anthony at 6:47 p.m.

Roll call vote was unanimous.

David Lahousse
Chairman